

# The Wreath Project

## 2003

### Instruction Packet



Sponsored by  
Texas Department of Health  
American Cancer Society, Texas Division  
Governor's Commission for Women  
Texas Cancer Council  
Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation

Adapted from a manual developed by the Southeastern Ohio BCCCP and the West Virginia Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Program.

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## INTRODUCTION

October 2003 marks the 17<sup>th</sup> annual National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and September 30 has been designated as the day for the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Wreath Project activities. The goal of Breast Cancer Awareness Month is to increase awareness of the importance of women receiving a mammogram and clinical breast examination at regular intervals.

The Texas Department of Health (TDH) Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP), the American Cancer Society, Texas Division (ACS), the Governor's Commission for Women, the Texas Cancer Council, and the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation encourage partners from across the state to conduct Breast Cancer Awareness Day activities in counties across the state by placing pink wreaths on as many courthouse or city hall doors as possible.

We urge your organization to take the lead role in your county to:

- Get support from legislators and/or County Commissioners/City Officials for the use of the door, and official proclamation, and possible appearances;
- Fund, design, create, or find additional assistance for the creation of the wreath;
- Organize the speakers and agenda for the day;
- Publicize, publicize, publicize; and,
- Give thanks to all involved.

This manual, including a checklist, sample media advisory and other materials is designed to aid in your efforts. These are suggestions. There is considerable room for flexibility so you can shape this project to fit your community. If you need any further assistance, feel free to call Ms. Clare Wolf, Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program, at (800) 452-1955. For information on reaching a legislator call Kelly Headrick, American Cancer Society, at (512) 919-1806.

## **SUGGESTED CHECKLIST FOR WREATH PROJECT EVENT**

### **Plan the event**

- Decide on a specific time. Consider holding the ceremony at mid-morning to increase the likelihood of media coverage (this is a good time for meeting press deadlines).
- Talk with County Commissioners' offices or the Mayor's office about:
  - Proclaiming October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month in your city or county
  - their participation in the ceremony
  - Hanging the wreath at a main entrance or other prominent place
- Outline the ceremony. Determine: who will host; speakers; order of events; what informational/promotional materials to provide; whether to serve refreshments.

POSSIBLE SPEAKERS and PEOPLE TO INVITE: American Cancer Society representative; Governor's Commission for Women member; Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation representative, breast cancer survivors and their families and friends; health care professional; clergy; a representative of your area's breast cancer coalition; members of your planning committee; TDH BCCCP representative; County Commissioners/Mayor and/or other community officials; local health department director/officer, City or County officials who are breast cancer survivors; a local celebrity; a Legislator [for assistance on contacting a Legislator call Kelly Headrick, American Cancer Society, at (512)-919-1806].

#### **IMPORTANT considerations:**

- The breast cancer survivor(s) should talk about their experience with breast cancer, Emphasizing that she is a survivor because her breast cancer was found early.
- Include the full range of agencies and organizations in the event. It is important that The community sees that all these agencies work together for this common purpose. Invite City/County employees to attend the ceremony.
- Identify a location for the ceremony. The ceremony should be where the wreath will be placed. If you select an outdoor site, identify a back-up plan in the event of bad weather.
- Develop an outline for the ceremony. Develop an outline or script with instructions for all who will be involved in the event.
- Determine whether to offer pink ribbons. The ribbons might be offered to speakers, media representatives, and people in the audience. Determine where you will get the ribbons and who will distribute them at the event.

### **Create the Wreath**

The wreath can be of any size or material, although we ask that it include enough pink to be a reminder that pink is the color of breast cancer awareness.

- Design the wreath. Determine the size and materials to use (keep in mind durability on an exterior door for the entire month of October)
- Create a budget, decide how to pay for it
- Determine who is responsible for purchase/gathering materials
- Determine who is to perform what activities
- Determine the deadline for completion
- Determine who will deliver the wreath to the ceremony

## Publicity

- Assign one person as publicity coordinator
- Write the media advisory, press release and public service announcement (samples included in this packet) in advance to prepare for media contact.
- Find out the name of the appropriate contact person for the television and radio stations and newspapers where you wish to have coverage.
- Contact each media representative, talk informally about the ceremony, tell them you have a media advisory that you will send them, answer their questions, and ask them what additional information they will need and when.
- Prepare for media coverage on the day of the ceremony: Have a press release and agenda ready to distribute at the site (including all the activities, names and titles), and/or have an agenda and a complete list of the speakers, participants and sponsors.
- Invite interested groups and individuals to the ceremony: breast cancer survivors, American Cancer Society, TDH BCCCP, Governor's Commission for Women member, Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, County/City Council members, cancer support groups, women's groups, garden clubs, women's church groups, YWCA Encore Plus, local cancer coalitions, physicians, large employers, others.
- Make a brief reminder to call each media organization.
- Take your own photographs of the ceremony and the wreath.

## Follow-up

- Send thank you notes to everyone who participated or contributed to the event. Thank you notes may help pave the way for a future event. Consider sending a thank you letter to the editor in the local newspaper(s).
- Remove the wreath; store or properly discard/recycle.
- **Share your experiences with the TDH BCCCP; send copies of all print and broadcast media, if possible, or at least a list of media coverage; send photos of your event; send a list of each county in which you held a ceremony; assess what went well, what did not and what would you do differently next year. Call or write to Clare Wolf, TDH BCCCP, 1100**

**West 49<sup>th</sup> Street, Austin, Texas 78756, (800) 452-1955**

- Send post-event press releases and photos with captions to the media for coverage (if you did not receive coverage during the event).

**KEY MESSAGES, CEREMONY SUGGESTIONS AND A SUGGESTED AGENDA**  
(DRAFT - use to guide discussion and decision-making)

The following are outlines of suggested ceremonies for the appointed day. Please feel free to adapt them as you need to or develop you own ceremony. A ceremony should be 20 to 30 minutes long and involve the hanging/placing of the wreath. The recommended time for the ceremony is anytime between 10 a.m. and noon.

**Key Messages**

- Breast cancer is a concern for *all* Texans B sons, daughters, spouses, friends, granddaughters, grandsons, cousins, nieces, nephews and others who are part of a woman's life
- All women have a chance of developing breast cancer
- Women 50 or older are the most likely to develop breast cancer
- Getting a mammogram only once is not enough
- The American Cancer Society recommends that women get a mammogram and clinical breast examination **every year** beginning at age 40
- African American women are the most likely to die of breast cancer than any other group of women
- Medicare helps pay the cost of a yearly mammogram for women age 40 or older with Medicare Part B
- A woman has the greatest chance of successful treatment if breast cancer is found at an **early** stage
- Early detection practices are part of a good breast health routine. A good breast health routine includes a yearly mammogram, clinical breast examination and monthly breast self-examination

**Ceremony Suggestions\***

Option A

- A member of the planning group/committee speaks about the wreath project, explains who made the wreath and who is sponsoring the Breast Cancer Awareness Day event. A breast

cancer survivor talks about the importance of breast cancer awareness and finding breast cancer early, emphasizing the fact that she is a survivor because her breast cancer was found early.

- The designated person reads the proclamation, which establishes October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month.
- The designated person, perhaps a breast cancer survivor, places the wreath.
- Announcement of any continuing activities.

#### Option B

- A breast cancer survivor opens the ceremony by speaking about her experience with breast cancer, emphasizing the fact that she is a survivor because her breast cancer was found early.
- Breast cancer survivors explain the wreath project, who made the wreath and who is sponsoring the event. Place the wreath.
- Announce continuing activities such as survivors available to speak to women about their experiences, information booth and refreshments.

#### Option C

- The planning group talks about why they made the wreath, explains the wreath project and who is sponsoring the project, and explains why breast cancer awareness is important.
- Planning group places the wreath.
- Announce continuing activities such as information booths/refreshments.

\*All ceremonies must include:

- 1) Recognition of who is sponsoring the event (your agency and local planning group, TDH, ACS, the Governor's Commission for Women, Texas Cancer Council, Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, donors, others);
- 2) explanation of the breast cancer screening services available through your agency;
- 3) mention that this is part of a statewide effort and similar ceremonies are taking place in communities across the state and at the State Capitol.
- 4) at least one survivor;
- 5) information on the event sponsors; and
- 6) literature with telephone numbers of where to call for further information.

## **Sample Agenda**

10:00 am

Host from organization welcomes group; describes the purpose of the event; introduces participants in wreath hanging ceremony, including non-speakers, introduces County Commissioner, Commissioner reads proclamation.

10:05 am

Host explains the wreath project, who is sponsoring the event and explains that pink is the color of breast cancer awareness, that the wreath is meant as a reminder that October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and that pink ribbons are available to anyone who would like to wear one to further promote awareness.

10:10 am

Someone speaks for those diagnosed with breast cancer and their families, preferably a breast cancer survivor, who will emphasize that she is a survivor because her breast cancer was discovered early.

10:20 am

A health professional speaks about the importance of awareness and early detection and of services offered through your agency and other agencies in the community.

10:25 am

The designated person places the wreath.

10:30

Host announces any continuing activities at the event and thanks all for attending.



**SAMPLE PROCLAMATION**  
(DRAFT - for 2003, to be adapted by each county or city)

- Ask that October be declared Breast Cancer Awareness Month in \_\_\_\_\_ (City or County)
- Be clear on what you are requesting and who is requesting it
- Make follow-up calls one week after making the request
- Publicize/mention the proclamation in all publicity

**Proclamation for Breast Cancer Awareness Month**

An estimated 13,700 Texas women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in 2003, and about 2,600 women will die of the disease. Nationally, breast cancer is the most common form of cancer in women.

Research shows that breast cancer mortality could be reduced by at least 30 percent if women followed recommended breast cancer screening guidelines.

All women have a chance of developing breast cancer. Women 50 or older are the most likely to develop breast cancer. African American women are the most likely to die of breast cancer than any other group of women. Getting a mammogram and breast exam only once is not enough. The American Cancer Society recommends that women get a mammogram and clinical breast examination every year beginning at age 40.

A woman has the greatest chance of successful treatment if breast cancer is found at an early stage. Early detection practices are part of a good breast health routine. A good breast health routine includes a yearly mammogram, clinical breast examination and monthly breast self-examination.

Further, Medicare helps pay the cost of a yearly mammogram for women age 40 or older with Medicare Part B

In recognition of the important lifesaving early detection practices available for breast cancer, We, the (I, \_\_\_\_\_,) County Commissioner(s) of \_\_\_\_\_ County (City), do hereby proclaim October 2003 as *Breast Cancer Awareness Month*. We/I urge all County (City) women to become aware that they are at risk and to discuss a screening program with their health care providers, I urge all other \_\_\_\_\_ County (City) citizens to encourage a woman they love to do so.

## **SUGGESTED MEDIA OUTREACH**

To spread the word about this event, you should encourage local media to report on the Wreath Project. Local media contacts should include newspapers, radio and television stations (including media organizations with audiences who are primarily people who are minorities), and organizations that publish special bulletins and newsletters.

### **Newspapers, Radio and Television**

- In August or early September, call public affairs directors and assignments editors at local news organizations and give them an Advance Request for Coverage (sample included in this packet). Ask them if they have any questions.
- Send a Media Alert (sample included in this packet) to local news organizations one week prior to the event.
- Provide radio stations with radio public service announcements (sample included in this packet).
- Request coverage of the wreath hanging on television and radio talk shows; provide names of individuals to contact for interviews.
- Give local news organizations suggestions for individuals to interview about the event (survivors, American Cancer Society, Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, TDH BCCCP, health care professionals, other).
- Tell news organizations about photo opportunities available at the ceremony such as wreath hanging, and breast cancer survivor.
- Follow-up news contact with a phone call in late September to finalize arrangements.
- Send a press release (attached) and photos with captions after the event.

### **Other Local Publications**

- Provide local civic, business, professional, religious and health organizations with the completed news release (sample attached) for their bulletins and newsletter.

### **Technical Assistance**

- Call Clare Wolf, Information Specialist, Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program, at (800) 452-1955, for assistance in planning media coverage.
- American Cancer Society chapters can call their local American Cancer Society representative for assistance in planning media coverage.

## Tips for Working with the Media

### Press Release Checklist

- Make it **timely**. News is now. Pitch your story in terms of what is new.
- Make it **urgent**. Use startling information, attention-getting facts and data to put the story in perspective.
- Make it **Apeopleized®**. Tell the practical importance of your announcement - what impact will your news have on people's lives?
- Make it **brief**, make it **focused**. If you don't hook the assignments editor or reporter quickly, then you lose them and your chances for coverage too. You know what message you want to get out. Isolate and make that message crystal clear.
- Make it **easy to understand**. Use layman's terms. Scrap as much bureaucratic, scientific or medical terminology as possible. If any must be used, then explain simply and concisely what it means. Don't assume that non-health professionals will understand the terms, which are commonplace to you.
- Make it **authoritative**. Quote appropriate expert(s) to convey some of the information.
- Make it **photo friendly**. Point out the visual aspects of the story. If it involves gadgets, machines and people being tested with them, tell about them. Indicate specific photo opportunities, which will be available such as a woman getting a mammogram or a clinician examining X-rays. TV coverage, in particular, is often determined by the visual opportunities a potential story offers.
- Make it **available**. Mail to all news organizations, which cover your service area. Include name and telephone numbers for the person in your office designated to handle media inquiries, and encourage media representative to call for more information.
- Make it **plain**. Bullet the Who, What, Where, When and Why elements so that they are unmistakably outlined.
- Make it **deadline friendly**. Mail several days in advance of your scheduled event. Generally, schedule the event any time from mid-morning to early afternoon. You risk losing coverage if your event is later in the day because of rigid press deadlines.

### During the Media Visit

- **Be accessible and accommodating during the reporter's visit**. Have professional experts and recipients of program services available for interviews and photographs. Escort media representatives, offering information as needed, but be careful not to dictate how they do their

job.

- **Be concise.** When interviewed, talk in brief, focused sentences. Use layman's terms to express the urgency of your news story.
- **Be prepared.** Have supplemental information such as fact sheets and background sheets on your program to give reporters for use as they might see fit.
- **Be natural.** Advise staff in advance to act naturally and cooperate with the media representatives.
- **Be honest.** If you don't know an answer to a particular question, then say so. But, emphasize that you will find out and call with an answer as quickly as possible. Then do just that.
- **Know their deadlines.** In making yourself, your staff, your clients and your facility available, remember that the news crews have rigid daily deadlines. If they need something, they generally need it quickly. Any time from mid-morning to early afternoon is usually good for most newsroom deadlines.

### **Follow-up**

- Follow-up any press release with a phone call to make sure the release arrived. Make the follow-up brief and to the point, and don't be pushy in requesting coverage. The person in charge of news assignments is extremely busy. Your chances for coverage are greater if you don't become a pest in his or her eyes.

**SAMPLE ADVANCE REQUEST FOR COVERAGE**  
DRAFT (needs to be discussed and finalized by each provider)

Fax or send an advance request for coverage to local radio and television stations. Follow your request with a phone call. You will probably have better luck if you know the name of the Public Affairs Director. The following is a sample for you to go by:

Advance Request for Coverage

TO:           Public Affairs Director  
              (station call letters)

FROM:       (Your name, organization and phone number)

**October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month**

Local breast cancer survivors will hang a wreath on the door of the \_\_\_\_\_ County Courthouse/City Hall/other public facility, on October \_\_\_\_, in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month in (City/County). In a brief ceremony, a proclamation will be read and there will be brief speeches by **(Choose one or more of the following or add your own, use name and full description/title:** a breast cancer survivor, a representative of the local cancer coalition, a representative from a local cancer treatment program, county commissioner, mayor, celebrity or others).

The wreath will remain on display for the month of October, which is designated nationally as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. News releases and public service announcements will be available (approximately date).

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON LOCAL ACTIVITIES BEING HELD \_\_\_\_\_, contact (your name and phone number).

**SAMPLE MEDIA ALERT**  
(to be adapted by each provider)

- Send to newspapers, radio stations and television stations one week prior to event
- Use your own letterhead
- Add details of local interest
- Proofread carefully

**MEDIA ALERT**

**Breast Cancer Awareness in \_\_\_\_ (County or City)**

**WHAT:** Breast Cancer Awareness Month ceremony co-sponsored by (appropriate organizations)

**WHO:** Name, title (public official)  
Name, title (health expert)  
Name, title (breast cancer survivor)  
Name, title (celebrity)

**WHERE:** Specific location (name and address) of your event

**WHEN:** Time, Day, and Date of your event

**WHY:** Ceremony, designating October \_\_ as Breast Cancer Awareness Day in your City or County, is part of a nationwide recognition of October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Wreaths similar to one to be placed at (your wreath location) will be displayed on county courthouses and city halls throughout Texas during October.

Some 2,600 Texas women will die from breast cancer this year. Another 13,700 will be diagnosed with the disease. Though more than 75 percent of all breast cancer occurs in women 50 or older, women of all ages are at risk. African American women are the most likely to die of breast cancer than any other group of women.

Breast cancer is a concern for all Texans -- sons, daughters, spouses, friends, granddaughters, grandsons, cousins, nieces, nephews and others who are part of a woman's life.

A woman has the greatest chance of successful treatment if breast cancer is found at an early stage. Early detection practices are part of a good breast health routine. A good breast health routine includes a yearly mammogram, clinical breast examination and monthly breast self-examination.

Medicare helps pay the cost of a yearly mammogram for women age 40 or older with Medicare Part B.

**NOTES:** Public is invited. Participants will be available for news media interviews following the ceremony, subject to individual schedules.

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*For more information, call (name of your agency's contact person) at (appropriate telephone number).*

### **SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE AFTER EVENT**

(to be adapted by each provider)

- Send to news organizations immediately following the event
- Use your own letterhead
- Add details of local interest
- Proofread carefully
- Send with photos of event; be sure to include captions for your photos with the names of all people pictured

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Breast Cancer Awareness in \_\_\_\_\_ County

Local breast cancer survivors hung a wreath on the door of the \_\_\_\_\_ County Courthouse/City Hall/other public facility, on October \_\_, in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month in (City/County). Similar ceremonies were conducted in communities throughout Texas. The ceremonies demonstrated a commitment to fight the disease that has claimed the lives of so many women. This year an estimated 2,600 Texas women will die from breast cancer, and 13,700 will be diagnosed with the disease.

The ceremony included (include the names of those participating such as local celebrities, breast cancer survivor and county commissioners, and mayor)

Early detection could reduce deaths due to breast cancer by as much as 30 percent. By celebrating County (City) Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the \_\_\_\_\_ (sponsoring group), the Texas Department of Health, the American Cancer Society, Susan G. Komen Foundation, Texas Cancer Council and the Governor's Commission for Women hope to increase awareness of how early detection can save lives.

2003 marks the 17th National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The goal of Breast Cancer Awareness Month is to increase awareness of the importance of early detection of breast cancer through public and professional education outreach efforts. To find breast cancer early, women should have a health professional check their breasts every year and have regular mammograms.

All women are at risk for developing breast cancer. Women 50 or older are the most likely to develop breast cancer. The American Cancer Society recommends that women 40 or older get a yearly mammogram and breast exam. Getting a mammogram and breast exam only once is not enough.

Many mammography facilities offer reduced rates on mammograms during October.

\_\_\_\_\_ (YOUR AGENCY) offers free mammograms, breast examinations, and Pap tests to women who qualify. For more information, call \_\_\_\_\_ (YOUR PHONE NUMBER). In addition, Medicare helps pay the cost of a yearly mammogram for women age 40 or older with Medicare Part B.

Other resources for information on breast cancer are the American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345 or the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237).

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*For more information on the Breast Cancer Awareness Day event, media may call (your contact person name) at (appropriate telephone number).*

## **SAMPLE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT**

(to be adapted by each provider)

- Contact radio station Public Affairs Director or station manager to schedule PSA's
- Fax, send, or deliver scripts to the stations several weeks in advance of your event
- Scripts should be typed and double-spaced, on a letterhead, if available
- Proofread carefully

**START DATE:**

**STOP DATE:**

**15 seconds:**

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month in \_\_\_\_\_ (County/City). Encourage the women in your life, especially those 50 or older, to get the facts about breast cancer. Finding breast cancer early can give them the gift of a lifetime. For more information, call (local phone number). This message brought to you by \_\_\_\_\_ (organization and/or station call letters.)

**end**

Come and join women from throughout the (your area) area who have survived breast cancer on October \_\_ at (location). It's all to mark Breast Cancer Awareness Month in (your city or county). Learn the facts about breast cancer. What you learn could save your life and someone else's. For more information, call the (local organizations and local phone number). This message brought to you by \_\_\_\_\_ (organization and/or station call letters)

**end**

**30 seconds:**

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month in \_\_\_\_\_ (County/City). Come and celebrate with women in \_\_\_\_\_ (County/City) who are breast cancer survivors, their families and friends. Be a part of the solution. Learn about the importance of finding breast cancer early and help spread the word. What you learn could save your life and someone else's! Come to the \_\_\_\_\_ (site) at \_\_\_\_\_ (time) on October \_\_\_\_\_. For more information, call (local organization and phone number) For This message brought to you by \_\_\_\_\_ (organization and/or station call letters).

**end**

*Contact: (Name, Organization, and phone number)*